

TO THE
REVEREND DOCTOR
JAMES BUTLER,
A TITULAR ARCHBISHOP,

FROM A FRIEND.

Rev. Mr. Bushe

D U B L I N:

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TO THE
 REVEREND DOCTOR
 JAMES BUTLER, &c.

REVD. SIR,

WHEN I was informed that a Letter from you to Lord Kenmare was to appear in the publick prints, containing some strictures on a late Publication by the present Bishop of Cloyne, I was very anxious to see it; as from the honour I have had in your Acquaintance, though not as close as I could wish it to be, and also from a knowledge of your Birth Integrity and Erudition, I had not upon my mind a doubt of meeting in it a Candid, Learned, and Gentleman-like *answer* to those parts of the Bishop of Cloyne's Pamphlet, which have appeared to you objectionable. I likewise expected to find as full, and as fair a *vindication* of those Tenets of the Church of

Rome, which have alarmed his Lordship for the safety of the Protestant Church and of the Constitution of this Kingdom.

Sir, your Letter has at last appeared; I have read it, and I am convinced, that you have not advanced any thing in it, which you do not believe to be strictly true.—But, though that might be fully sufficient for the quieting of your own Conscience, and perhaps of that too of the Right Honourable Nobleman to whom your Letter is addressed,—yet as it seems that the Letter was intended to go further, and not to rest in the cabinet of that Noble Lord, but to make its way into the world, the Community certainly has a right to call upon you for incontrovertible proofs, and is not obliged to take mere Assertions, the opinions of some Individuals, or even the sentiments of little Assemblies self-conven'd, as if they could establish Facts, which are brought forward to overthrow regular official Documents enforcing great and authorized Doctrines of the Church of Rome, and as it were sanctified by the holy Interposition and Zeal of a Roman *Legate*.—Cardinal Ghilini writes to the Titular Arch-Bishops, and Bishops of this Kingdom, at a moment when our Legislature wished to throw open wide the doors of Liberty to every Subject, and to spread an Universal Toleration through the land. His Lordship of Cloyne has *published* his Letter. It strongly speaks for the Legate's sentiments, and for the ordinances of his Prince, and his Conclave;



Conclave; and that it should have its full force, the Nuncio refers the Bishops of this Kingdom to the many Decisions of the Holy *Councils* on a single Tenet, which like the sin of *Judah* is written with a Pen of *Iron*, and is *graven* upon the table of their hearts and upon the horns of their altars. One of the Suffragan Titular Bishops of the Province of Leinster, Doctor de Burgho Historiographer &c. &c. with more Zeal than Prudence, and perhaps with the vanity of an Author, introduced into a Work he had then in hand, his *Hibernia Dominicana*, the Cardinal Legate's letter, which with all its inflammable materials might possibly have lain in a *seemingly quiet* state, like the devouring fires of *Volcanos*.

You say, Sir, that the Bishop of Cloyne by the publication of his *Pamphlet* has undone all that has been done in favour of the Roman Catholics by undermining the primary title the Roman Catholics had to the protection of Government, and the *confidence* of their fellow-subjects.—No, Sir, it is the publication of your Cardinal Legate's letter, and of Doctor de Burgho's encomiums upon it, which you ought to arraign, for that loss of confidence, which you seem so much to apprehend. I knew intimately Doctor de Burgho; he was a very learned man, and well esteemed by men of the first learning in *this* Country and upon the *Continent*: The authority of such a man must have great weight with the mass of the people.

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You say, Sir, that the Legate's letter, with the Doctor's animadversions upon it, were consigned to eternal *Oblivion* in a meeting at Thurles, of the Roman Catholic Prelates in the year 1775; and that upon a notification to Rome of your proceedings of that day, nothing in them was considered there in the smallest degree obnoxious to the Holy See. Now, Sir, permit me to avow that in my apprehension the *Oblivion* to which those works and those *secret* proceedings were consigned, and for which you are pleased to give yourselves so much *credit* with Government, might be considered in a very *different* sense; and I am of opinion, that every dispassionate person will naturally say, that a *publick* censure passed upon those works, and a serious *confutation* of them by yourselves, with an *unequivocal* approbation from the Holy See of all that you had done, would have more effectually strengthened the confidence of Government and your fellow-subjects, than your dark shade of boasted oblivion could possibly have done.

And indeed, Sir, I cannot but observe, that there was in your own minds a troublesome alarm that a day would come, when a *light* would shine upon this oblivion; and therefore it was *wise* in you to be *prepared* to meet the event. And amidst the triumph of this ingenious movement, you bring the heavy charge against the Bishop of Cloyne, that he has searched out those works, and
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has *published* them, with the horrid and absurd view of spreading distrust among a people he must live with, and in the hope of making use of the discovery he has made, as a deadly blow to all your fond hopes of protection and confidence from Government and your fellow-subjects.

If, Sir, you had read with attention his Lordship's Pamphlet, you could not have so far deviated from the general tenor of your conduct, as to hazard a conclusion so groundless and so directly opposite to all the wishes of the Right Reverend Prelate. His constant object in all his labours has been to promote cordial *Union*, to make every man see and feel the advantages of Amity, and to join in one respectable Body Politic the several parts of this kingdom, which has been shattered by the animosity of contending parties. But his Lordship does not think *that* Union can be formed upon such fantastic foundations, as these Tenets, which may be moulded at the will of foreign Powers.—Milton, confessedly a very able Statesman, with an astonishing universality of Learning and Genius, was decidedly of this opinion. In the dreadful confusion, and anarchy of *his* times, his wonderful mind felt the heroic impulse to recal things into order; and the plan of Government, which he had conceived for our Meridian, and published at the time, was drawn upon the large scale of Universal Toleration; but he laments, that he could not admit those
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of the *Roman Catholic* Communion into it, because he says “ that their Tenets are
 “ inadmissible; that they argue from other
 “ authorities than the Scriptures, and from
 “ such human authorities draw vicious con-
 “ clusions, and from thence infer dangerous
 “ positions,” obnoxious to such a general *Union*, as he proposed and wished to see established.

But, Sir, the *Bishop of Cloyne* does not go so far; from the liberality of his mind he hopes the *best*; he says, that he is very *certain* that many of their Communion are *better than their Tenets*. He hopes that there are many *other better* means of safety to the State, than Oaths of Allegiance, to bind the Roman Catholics of this kingdom to their Protestant fellow-subjects. There are many *civil* Interests in the hands of the Legislature, which can more effectually secure this attachment than *Oaths* of Allegiance, which are too often overcome by the force of the Sword, by the greater force of the assumption of Spiritual Dominion, and by the subtilty and vanity of scholastic learning, so admirably ridiculed by the witty Author of *Pudibras*.

“ For he that made, and forced it, *broke* it;

“ *Not* he that for convenience *took* it.

Sir, the natural disposition of your mind is unquestionably good. We have very strong and authentic proof of your best wishes for the quiet and peace of this Kingdom. At the head

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of your Suffragan Bishops lately convened. by you at *Cork*, you called before you *one of your own Communion*, whose conduct is now the subject of general discussion, and who had fallen under your displeasure for certain *publications*, which seemed to you to be unguarded and unfounded, and to have given NATIONAL OFFENCE. If I am well informed, this Gentleman was ordered to *give up* those papers, and likewise *the opinions which they taught*. But though he was humbled upon his *knees* before you, yet you were not able to humble his mind, or bend his haughty spirit. He would not obey your orders, but treated them with contumacy and contempt, in an arrogant and presumptuous stile telling you, *QUOD SCRIPSI, SCRIPSI*; upon which, Sir, I am told that you with a virtuous and noble indignation reminded him, that these were the words of *PONTIUS PILATE*.

But though your conduct in this instance is much to be admired, yet I cannot avoid canvassing the matter of your late publication, and shall now proceed to that passage in which you say, that you received letters from the Cardinal *Marefufchi*, who was intrusted by his "Holiness with the superintendence
 " of your ecclesiastical affairs in Ireland, and
 " also from the Sacred *Congregation*, conveying
 " a full approbation of all that you had done;
 " and that they found nothing in the Test of
 " Allegiance held out by the Legislature to
 " the Roman Catholicks of Ireland, contrary
 " to the principles of the Roman Catholick
 " Faith."

“Faith.”——Undoubtedly, Sir, this will be allowed; and it is what we now complain of. But I do not wish to press this point upon you; and therefore I shall only say, that the assenters to a Faith, which holds that there is in any One or in any Order of men an *absolute dispensing power*, must allow, let their *feelings* be what they may, that there are no engagements, no obligations, however strong or sacred, that are not under the control of that power; and that of course, Tests of Allegiance, though bound up by the most solemn Oaths, are not in the hands of those who gave them, are not of any security to those to whom they were given; they virtually reside solely in the Expositor of that Faith; on his Will alone their existence depends.

Sir, you say that you shewed those letters to *Lord Pery* and to our *Primate*, and that you have *kept* authentic vouchers of them.—Surely, Sir, those learned and wise Personages must have perceived the delicacy of your situation at the time; and must have been surprized at your labours and at your authentic Vouchers, *authentic proofs* of nothing.—But, Sir, I could have wished, when your curious confidence led you to communicate those letters, that you had gone a little further, and had shewn, at the same time, the *penitential* letter from Cardinal Ghilini that you tell us of, or that you had produced any regular judicial proofs instituted in your Spiritual Courts, and followed up by official censure and pains against the Cardinal Legate, and
against

against Doctor de Burgho for his broad Comments and ingenious Eulogy on the Legate's *pastoral letter* in his *Hibernia Dominicana*.—No, Sir, we have no authentic vouchers of Abhorrence in the *Sacred College* or in the *Sacred Congregation*, of such dangerous tenets.

The Spirit of your *Consecration Oath* is tamed and reduced; and by your interpretation of *persequar & impugnabo* it is plain you wish to consign this whole business to your favourite Cave of Oblivion.—But it was not according to this mild exposition of the terms, that Bossuét, Bishop of Meaux, *pursued* and *fought* in *deadly* spiritual war, that truly great man, Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambray, a man of the most brilliant Genius, and of Virtues yet more conspicuous, on account of a sort of Yielding in him to some Opinions productive of the purest morals, and of the best uses to society, which were taught in the reign of *Lewis the Fourteenth* of France, by a virtuous sect called *Quietists*, very much resembling the *Quakers* of our Country.—This great and good man (though patronized by Madame de *Maintenon*, favourite of that despotic Prince) fell a victim to the persecution of Bossuét; and thus by the acrimony of a jealous author, and by his pious intrigues, and with the Magick *Fiat* of the Holy See, this Ornament of your Church was laid under an Interdiction, and obliged to go through a painful Penance; and from that Pulpit, from which he had so often with inspired energy of
persuasion

persuasion preached the goodness and mercies of his SAVIOUR to man, he was compelled to give up those opinions, and to abhor *himself and them* in the shameful dust and ashes with which Bossuét had covered him, and to stand by a witness to the Burning of those Works (*worth an Alexandrian Library*) by the common Hangman.—Has any Judgment like *this* been passed upon the Cardinal Legate's letter, and upon the Supplement of Doctor de Burgho's *Hibernia Dominicana*, which at this day (I will venture to say) is in the hands of every learned man of your Communion in this kingdom? —Sir, the Bishop of Cloyne has given us in his Pamphlet a Transcript of your Consecration Oath, as breathing a congenial spirit with the Legate's Letter and Doctor de Burgho's Supplement. You are pleased to insert in your Letter a sort of a Paraphrase upon this Oath by the Bishop of Meaux, who dwells much upon the vague parenthesis of *Salvo meo ordine*;—and you, Sir, whose authority and exposition have *infinitely more* weight with me, say, that the words *persequare & impugnabo* have no other meaning than that of opposing and refuting by the spiritual weapons of the *Gospel* all broachers of doctrines contrary to its principles. —Sir, I know that I am now writing to a Gentleman conversant in various kinds of Literature; therefore give me leave to ask you, if you have met in any language an instance, except this one, where *figurative* and metaphorical

metaphorical words are used in constructing *Oaths*. An Oath should have but *one* meaning, and that the plainest and most simple; and the best ascertained words in any language should be sought for, in the forming of it.— But, Sir, I do conceive that if a *Poet* in his *finest phrenzy* was describing two famished Lions fighting for food in the sandy deserts of Lybia, he could not be more fortunate in any words than *persequor* & *impugno*; at least, I hope it will be allowed me, that they ill become the language of an *Apostolic* preacher of the Gospel of *Peace*.

Sir, I fear that I am exceeding the bounds of a Letter, and trespassing too long upon your time, and therefore I will not detain you by any animadversions upon Opinions of this or that Monarch to which you allude; they are very foreign to the points in question; but it might be of use to say, that all the States of Europe, and the two Americas, and every ill-fated spot on the Globe besides, which has been visited by this *dispensing* spiritual power and spiritual pride, have felt severely the rueful effects.—And, Sir, you will agree with me, that this must be for ever the case, when a weak, wretched man can bring himself to believe that the Supremacy of the *Almighty* is delegated to him alone, and when he can find others to unite with him in this madness; it is not surprising then, that he should find himself upon *the wings of the storm*, and attempt to *direct*
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the whirlwind.—And surely, Sir, when such an impious folly possesses the mind; when a belief prevails, that all those who are out of the pale of the Church of *Rome*, are likewise out of the favour of GOD, it is not wonderful, that the words *persequar & impugnabo* should be found in your Consecration Oath, and that such Spiritual *Generals* should with such Vigour take this Oath. — There is a Faith inculcated thro' the land, according to the dangerous and seducing Spirit of which it is a *virtue to deceive*; and it is the *Embassy of an Angel*, in the *propagation* of it, to be sent abroad to *destroy*. Can *legislation* be given to men of *such* a Faith? Can *Armies and Fleets* be trusted to their Command, can the *Education* of our Youth be consigned to their care, in a Kingdom where two thirds of the Inhabitants are of this Faith, and where many of them are Tenants to large properties which their Ancestors had *forfeited* for the repeated breaches of those *Oaths* of Allegiance so much of late depended on?

Should we not *then*, Sir, *think well* of the *Bishop of Cloyne*, who *slumbers* not in the hour of danger, but stands *firm* on the top of his Watch-tower, calls loudly to the Nation, and warns the people of their danger.— Sir, the *times* call for *plain speaking*; I should not otherwise have troubled you with this Letter, and did not wish to enter with you into so minute a discussion of the subject. I shall only now beg leave to transcribe a few lines

lines from a valuable Performance, deservedly held in the highest esteem by the Public, written in the strongest and most elegant style, with the fullest Legal and Historical Information that can be met with, by *Dominick Trant, Esq;*

In one place he says, “ And who is there
 “ so ignorant, as not to know that the
 “ *political* Constitution of a Country has an
 “ intimate connection with its native *Church*?
 “ that the manners, morals, habits, and
 “ opinions of the people are framed and
 “ moulded by the nature of their *Creeds*, and
 “ by the purity, or corruption of their religi-
 “ ous Doctrines and forms of Worship?”

And in another place, speaking of the ascendancy of *the Romish Church*, he says,
 “ to speak in the mildest language of modern
 “ Toleration, it is not entirely favourable to
 “ liberty of Conscience, or to the personal
 “ freedom and civil rights of mankind.

Sir, it is injustice to mutilate a work of such distinguished merit; but I hope that what I have pointed out may excite a wish in you to read the entire Pamphlet; I shall not then be sorry for having taken this liberty with it, nor do I think that you will consider your time mis-spent in the perusal.

I am, Sir,

with great respect and esteem,

Your very obedient,

and very humble servant, &c. &c.

A Friend to Toleration upon safe Principles.



